

Henry
JG Bodmin

EXCERPTS FROM A MUCH THOUGHT OVER DIARY.

INTRODUCTION

This is not a diary as such. I found it very difficult to return from 'site' and recount in writing what had usually been a very exhausting day. I am not really practiced in the art of Diary keeping anyway. What I did do was write alot of fragmented notes whenever the need arose. This meant that I returned to London with all sorts of bits of paper with fragmented, bits and pieces of various days. These rather chaotic ramblings have served as a mnemonic enabling me to construct a "kind of" diary. The days may well be a bit mixed up but I am not sure that this matters too much. It also means that my use of tense is very fluid but in the true nature of Post modernism I have decided not to worry too much about this. I just hope it is intelligible.

Tuesday

Well this is it. I'm on the train on my way to Bodmin Parkway feeling a mixture of excitement and a certain sense of trepidation. I wonder what this year will be like. I have a feeling that there will be alot more structure to it all. I'm thinking about what Barbara made of the little letter I sent to her regarding the whole issue of hierachy. Last year we had this very unrealistic idea of letting the project run according to a communist ideal whereby all ideas were to be shared on an equal basis. There was little in the way of a prepared methodology - we would develop as we went along, like a "narrative". This idea was and is in many respects great and, to begin with, worked well. However as the two weeks progressed it became more and more of a distant theoretical idea rather than a practice and we fell, perhaps inevitably, into a "hierarchy of Knowledge". A "significant stone" belonging to Chris or Barbara would sometimes be treated with more significance than a "significant stone" belonging to either myself or Cath.

Judging by the circular Barbara sent me a few weeks ago things are certainly going to be somewhat different this year. Take for instance the opening line:

"We are pleased to inform you that your application to join the Leskernick project has been succesful"

Seems like there has been a ruthless selection process. I feel quite

privileged.

And a few lines down (regarding camping arrangements);

"There is to be silence after 11 O'Clock"

This was made in respect to a few incidents that happened last year. Though I am a bit worried that there will be a big division between professionals/lecturers and undergrads/recent Graduates. It was nice how we had so much discussion last year. OK we never got away from Hierarchy but alot of barriers were taken down and there was a genuine sharing of ideas.

Got to Reading Station already. This Station brings back all sorts of memories. I used to wait here for a connection to Oxford usually on the way back from my mother's. It's also associated with one my first free festivals. But that's another story lets just say that Reading has never really looked the same since.

The train is now in Cornwall and we're winding our way along the South Coast. It's a strange blend of natural beauty and tacky sea side towns. A dubious brown foam rests on alot of the beaches. Accross from me are sat two surfer types who keep checking me out. Through some subtle evesdropping I find out they are from Cornwall and I am reminded of another issue surrounding the project. We are surveying and dissecting someone elses landscape. As Archaeologists from London we are almost foreigners yet by the end of two weeks we had become so possessive of Leskernick. It's become "our patch" and all visitors to the Hill seemed to undergoe a thorough investigation by Barbara, Chris and Sue. This is due, perhaps, to the fact that as we had just spent ten days studying the place we had acquired a unique "knowledge" of Leskernick and through this we had begun, subconsciously, to appropriate it. I'm a bit worried about the excavation as well. It has only just occured to me that the Huts will inevitably have to be taken apart and hence destroyed.

Wednesday

Typical of me to arrive and find my first day is day off day. Thankfully it had been decided to spend the morning on Leskernick and in the afternoon to visit Cradoc Moor with Dave Hooley who I remember from last year and really liked. It would have been terrible to have ended up being driven around Cornwall on some Day off type excursion after all the excitement and impatience

to get back to Leskernick.

We approach the site from a different direction to last year and in a funny way I find this a little dissapointing. It was hard to get orientated at first. I wasn't quite sure which part of the moor we were on but as we got nearer and familiar hills came properly into view I began to feel more secure. Once we got to the Cairn where we have lunch it was as though I hadn't been away from the place for long at all.

Everyone has been delegated a job. Roles have been assumed by people and today I felt a little out of place. There is not the flexibility of last year. The archaeologists are very professional in their outlook and a divide of an us and them type is very apparent. Because of this I began to worry as to where I would fit in - what would my role in all this be ? especially as I have just spent the last year managing a wine shop.

"What would you like to do ?" Asked Chris and Barbara.

"Well I'd quite like to just have a wonder and re-familirise myself with the settlement."

I am not sure that Barbara liked this too much. I think she felt that there was too much "wondering around" last time. I do not think that wondering around a Hill (and I mean wonder as opposed to wander) Like Leskernik is an aimless activity. I think it was Barret who discussed the difference between the archaeological responses of the visitor and that of the "proffessional archaeologist". The techniques and approaches of the archaeologist (aerial photos, plans, records) help achieve a holistic conception of the site. In contrast the visitor's response is partial and erratic. In the former approach time and space are collapsed to form a simulataneous, objective, perception of the site. Inevitably such an approach will fail to account for the the ways in which a prehistoric site (or any site) affects the orientation and movement of the body. So walking around feeling, looking and thinking about the place without any preconcieved plan can be very enlightening.

While sitting on the cairn, smoking a roll up before setting off with Chris and Ceira, I observe an abundance of photocopied forms rustling in the wind "HUT RECORDING FORM" and I begin to think that in striving for credibility the survey may be in danger of falling into the very traps from which (I hope) we are trying to avoid. Still, I got to have a wonder around. At first with Chris

who was showing Ceira around. I could sense a bit of 'guided tour fatigue' on Chris's part; "....and this hut is very special because it has a really weird Shrine Stone at the back..... Barbara calls it the menstrual hut....I'm not sure why..."

While walking around on my own I am surprised at how quickly I find my 'bearings' and how I can recognise huts and features from last year.

After a quick lunch we drove towards the Cheese ring - a really beautiful drive through Bodmin Moor. I was surprised at how big the area is. I don't think that any of us realised what was in store for us when we arrived at Craddock Moor. Seeing as this was the day off I think most people were expecting a fairly casual jaunt up to the Cheese Ring. David Broom, who has the most amazing and intimate knowledge of this landscape, was keen to show us as much as he possibly could. We started off at the Hurlers and discussed, then a barrow, then a stone avenue. Stopped and discussed a bit and went to see some field enclosures, a few huts and a stone row. By now our party was rapidly dissipating. It has been a hot day and people were looking pretty worn out. Most of all Chris who was sweating profusely and looking really haggard (I later find out that he hadn't bothered to take his insulin for a "few days" - I pity his GP). Although this walk was hard work I enjoyed every moment. Just being in such a beautiful, barren wide open space was a wonderful escape from the claustrophobia of city life. This experience was made even more special by David's intimate knowledge of the landscape. Just as I would be getting really pissed off with yet another field enclosure David would suddenly turn around and show us something fascinating - like the ringed stone. Seeing this was very satisfying - it seems to solidify a lot of our ideas about the stones having some kind of symbolic significance to the Bronze Age inhabitants of this part of Cornwall. Another thing I liked about this walk was the way in which David did not restrict himself to talking about the prehistoric landscape. He continually pointed out bits of industrial masonry (it was quite surreal to encounter a section of a lighthouse on a walk to look at prehistoric monuments) and other fascinating things like (possible) early Christian Crosses. By doing this he brought the whole thing into the present, referring, for example, to the eviction of travellers.

The final ascent to the Cheese Ring just about finished me off but it is so stunningly beautiful up there it was worth every step. When we reached the top Chris spotted something "look... a SHRINE STONE!".

On the way down we had to inspect an avenue that Wayne was certain he had

found. By this stage I had seen too much and any alignment of stones was of only a passing interest to me. I wasn't particularly convinced by this rather shoddy looking and random conglomeration of stone and went off to see the Long Barrow. When we got to the barrow we sat down for a rest and over a cigarette Chris raised his idea about "re-commissioning" the stones at the end of the stone row. I was not surprised to find David opposed to this and I tended to agree with him. Chris reckoned it would look "amazing" and David began to look worried. My own opinion on this is that it would be an arrogant thing to do for a number of reasons. Firstly; it seems that we all agree that the stones were probably de-commissioned rather than having naturally falling over hence the fallen stones represent a moment in history of which we have yet to achieve much of an understanding. To start moving them around to satisfy our own theoretical ideas would deny others of that representation. Secondly; it is not our landscape - we visit Leskenick but once or twice a year at the most and then return "Home". It seems obvious that we are "outsiders" as far as the local people are concerned and it seems a bit disrespectful to start shifting the stones of prehistoric monuments for a couple of weeks every year and then disappear. I think that Chris thought my argument narrow minded and I can see his point of view in terms doing something in the "present" and not "freezing the past" but these things are never simple and the consequences of such ideas should be thought through a little bit more.

We had a barbecue last night where the majority of us drank too much. Pippa had cooked loads of food (Newberry By-bass cuisine) which was very enjoyable. I had a nice chat with Penny who was well oiled with whiskey - sad to hear that the project in Cumbria ended on bad terms. Barbera didn't stay too long and looked pretty weary after our marathon walk. Chris began to warm up once he had had a few drinks and the conversation flowed into the early hours. Chris said that he finds my middle class background "really annoying" but on questioning not too dissimilar from his own (it turns out he was also educated privately). Still it was all good fun.

Friday

I awoke still feeling a bit drunk which I really hate and went to have a shower to re-invigorate myself. I got to the showers to find that you need a shower token. Walk to the reception feeling grumpy and eventually get a very unsatisfactory shower (tepid and dribbly). But it served its purpose of refreshing me and off we went to Leskenick.

When we got there I was asked to cover some of the Southern settlement looking for any interesting 'shrine like' stones. I get called the 'Shrine Hunter' by people I have never met before. The day began by following Barbara and her 'team' on their "Hut Interior" survey. A "Hut Recording Form" is produced from which we are directed to look, measure and draw certain features. The problem is that alot of the categories inevitably allow for a large amount of subjective interpretation. "Is this stone 'oblong' or 'triangular'" do we note fallen stones in terms of how they would look if standing? Things aren't helped by the need to sketch 'significant' stones (everyone sketches things differently) and I am reminded of the 'standing around' category of last year. A discussion emerged that was as circular as the hut itself and I felt that things were not getting anywhere. I could see Barbara's patience wearing thin so I slipped off to see the excavation of hut 24.

Here I found some peace amongst the tranquil, soporiphic rhythmic sounds of trowling. It seems that the survey is having some problems. Whilst the ideas behind the methods are sound and theoretically very interesting the objectification of those ideas is proving troublesome.

After lunch I was finally given something more 'concrete' to do. I went with Matt to look at the enclosures around the Western Settlement. Chris asked me to do this after Barbara had just asked me to look at the Southern settlement. I felt very uncomfortable for a while - should I follow the instructions of Chris or Barbara ? I had forgotten about some of the politics of archeology.

I can feel an uncomfortable tension both on the hill and back at the campsite between those involved with the survey and those involved with the ecavations. There are alot of whispered conversations and some people have expressed that they feel very unsure about the project.

Barbara has become quite possessive about the Southern Settlement where as Chris seems happier amongst the shrines of the Western. I personally prefer the Western Settlement but this is probably only because this is the settlement that I am more familiar with. This side of the hill is more clustered, Rough Tor is nearly always in view. The way in which it is bounded by this big, robust enclosure wall makes it easier for me to develop a mental picture (or map).

While looking around the further reaches of the Western settlement Matt and I stumbled accross a very interesting pattern of stones with one very prominent triangular stone. We later showed this to Chris: "This is amazing".

SATURDAY

I decided that simply looking for things without properly recording was a bit futile and I had felt a little redundant yesterday. Seeing as expanses of clutter were often connected with walls it seemed to make sense to survey these as it would help develop a better understanding of the Western settlement. Randomly looking for significant stones seemed a bit silly and one would be more likely to find interesting features by following the walls. It would also mean that any interesting features found would be in a context in terms of relationships to huts. I put this to Barbera and Chris who were both looking a bit despondent having just discovered that a lot of the 'Hut recording' forms had been done very badly. Barbara tentatively pulled out an 'Enclosure and Impressive stones' form. I couldn't help feeling annoyed at the fact that I had to persuade people to be allowed the 'privilege' of possessing a recording form. Perhaps it was the intense heat and lack of shade from the sun but I felt that Barbera was being over possessive about access to proper recording and as I know the western settlement quite well now I felt that this was unwarranted. It was a classic case 'knowledge' being controlled. The irony of this is very striking considering who was controlling this knowledge.

I have not spoken to Sue much yet she seems pre-occupied with worries about the excavation. The Diggers keep themselves to themselves. I am suspicious that they think a lot of what we are doing on the survey is a bit barmey. We do sometimes end up in rather absurd situations such as arguing over whether one pile of stones is a "significant cairn" as opposed to another. But in many ways the survey is breaking new ground and does not have a century of knowledge and practice to fall back on which any excavation obviously does have.

SUNDAY

Continued surveying the walls of the Western settlement. I am doing this with Matt who I get on well with. He is very enthusiastic if a little over imaginative at times (as I was last year). This is strange as he is also very sceptical and often becomes overly so by questioning the whole project "this is all supposition" and yet a minute later he'll be enthusing about how significant a certain stone is. He also believes in Aliens.

I think it was today (I wrote this on Tuesday) that Chris had his "Cairn crises". As Matt and myself studiously surveyed one of the outer walls Chris kept popping into view, running from one hut to another with an expression of

extreme anxiety. I found out later that Chris had suddenly decided that the huts were "not huts at all but cairns". Barbara brought him back to earth but Chris thinks that there is something really 'weird' about the huts and we think about the Hut circles David had shown us on Craddoc Moor.

I had pasta for supper and spent the rest of the evening in the pub with Chris who had now recovered from his little crises.

Monday

The division between the diggers and surveyers is becoming ever more apparent. While this is perfectly understandable on site it is a pity that this division applies socially as well. Especially when we are all together at the campsite. I do not understand why they insist on parking their cars in a different place to ours. I spent the Day with Matt continuing our work on the walls. Looking at the walls in this way is revealing some interesting ideas. Some of the huts clearly have their own field systems whereas others are bounded together in a compound. The people who lived in these huts probably used more communal fields. I am beginning to think that there are actually a series of settlements on this hill as opposed to just two- this leading onto the suggestion that this hill was used for settlement, probably on and off, over a long period of time this emphasises the 'ritual/symbolic importance of the place. Perhaps the hill had a very fluid population that fluctuated according to the passing of certain seasons and symbolically important times in the calendar - such as the Solstice. Some huts are much more robust and larger than others. One hut (I think it was hut 4) has various annexes and also clearly its own fields. I see this hut as a kind of 'Homestead' of a later date than the huts in the 'compound'.

Matt and I have been surveying the outer most wall of the Western settlement. This wall is certainly the longest on the hill and is quite unique in that it seems to have no connection with any hut. The large area that it encloses has a series of cleared areas that become increasingly visible as the sun lowers in the afternoon. I suggest that these are probably very early fields. This area also has a large number of cairns (one particularly nice one with very stylish curb stones). The wall itself has many triangular shaped stones and its length (it reaches right up to the top of the hill eventually connecting with a wall that leads to Hut 3) entices all sorts of interpretations. Matt suggests it may have been a wind break and I groan at his functionalism.

Today went really well despite the intense heat. I enjoy working with Matt and reporting to Barbara and Chris at lunch is usually quite amusing. Barbara is

finding lots of Cairns while at the same time nobody can actually explain to me what a "cairn" actually is (any pile of stones?).

Instead of going directly back to the campsite Chris, Crystal and myself walked to Rough Tor via brown Willy. After such a hot day it was really exhausting but very enjoyable. I find it exhilarating seeing a point far off in the distance and thinking 'right, I'm going to walk over to that place'. Every time we crossed a stream Chris would insist on taking his shoes and socks off so progress was a little slow. From brown Willy we got a really good view of Leskernick and as it was approaching dusk the light was just right for looking at the pattern of Field enclosures. Once we got to Rough Tor we were all fairly knackerd but it was a good time of day to be there. We had the place to ourselves. The gusting wind and approaching dusk gave the place an eeiry, mysterious air. Chris showed as around and kept saying how weird a place it is. Unfortunately we couldn't stay for very long as Wayne would be on his way to rescue us. Somehow I managed to loose my glasses on the way down which really annoyed me. By the time we got back to the Campsite I was too tired to cook so I got Wayne to make me some sandwiches. I had a few glasses of wine and we had a nice chat.

Tuesday

Continued with the walls. We are now doing the enclosure wall to the compound. Studying this wall is giving me a really good picture of this part of the settlement. Having studied the outer walls Matt and I have been left pretty much to our devices. Doing the compound wall is bringing us near to all the other people working on the Western side of the hill. There is usually Chris and Wayne to be found here. Chris wearing Waynes panama and looking very colonial with Wayne in his Lawrence of Arabia style head gear. Both studiously measuring huts. They seem to work well together. At the hut excavation there is Mike looking anxious, peturbed and generally quite stressed out at what he is finding/not finding. It was very hot again today and tempers were beginning to fray. Chris and Barbara are finding it hard to work together- whenever Barbara comes to the western settlement there is intense discussion and one can always sense a bit of friction "oh is that how you are doing it I have been doing it this way..".

Later Chris says that he finds Barbara too domineering and I am inclined to agree especially when I see her surveying - board in hand documenting everything with Crystal desperately trying to keep up noting down Barabara's dictation

. The excavations look immaculate but very little has been found with the exception of a small crystal which Mike refuses to record as a small find. After some heated discussion a compromise is born whereby it is recorded as a "Narrative find". This seems particularly supercilious as surely any find is a 'narrative' find. Mike also seems to be increasingly impatient with Chris who has a habit of becoming particularly facetious whenever he approaches an excavation trench.

Back at the campsite I ate pasta again and went to the bar. Today was the first day that I began to miss home. A few people had stayed on the hill to do some "art". While I like the idea of art and archaeology combining I cannot help but think that the way in which it was being done undermined the process of art. In just the same way that it would be very difficult for an artist to just jump into Archaeology so it is with an archaeologist to jump straight into being an artist. Most of the 'Art' manifested itself in the wrapping of Backstones with various bits of cloth (a la Christo). The point or meaning of this was lost on me. I see the stones being 'special' in their own right. They certainly draw ones attention due to their interesting shapes and positioning - so why wrap them up in some cloth that has been chosen arbitrarily. This was discussed at great length back in Barbara's caravan later that night. I had drunk too much and as often happens talked too much as well. But I think I managed to get my point across without being too opinionated.

WEDNESDAY

Awoke feeling hungry and insecure about the previous evening - had I gone overboard?

I had a "Full English" at the cafe and felt much better. Once on site Chris asked if he could come and see the work that I had done with Matt on the Enclosure wall. Barbara got a bit upset and said that she wanted to 'check' the wall as well. Chris retorted "you can't be on everything Barbara!" This was not the best start to the day. Once we started showing them around the wall disagreements inevitably arose and I began to get increasingly agitated. It seems that the way that Matt and I have filled the forms out is very different to the way in which Barbara has. I argue that the way we have done it makes more sense. Barbara continues to check everything in minutes "have you recorded this? I think this should definitely be recorded"

Chris: "Why? that is just a natural feature."

Barb : "I think it has been placed there"

And so it carried on with Chris and Barbara both winding each other up. I **started** to get the giggles as they carried on. "You can't always go around making everything cultural" says Chris to Barbara with both his hands in the top pockets of his shirt.

From this moment onwards I couldn't help myself from suffering from periodic bouts of laughter. It was decided during lunch to survey the interior of the compound. Matt and myself were to mark out any large earthfast boulders while Wayne, Chris and Barbara grappeld with thier ideas and a tape measure. Matt started to crack up really badly as another argument arose. I cannot remember exactly what it was about but I can remember Wayne trying to mediate between the two, the tape measure redundantly lying stretched out over the turf. Eventually Barbara left and the tape measure was put away. I felt a little sorry for Barbara. I think she finds it very difficult to get through to Chris. They have two very different approaches to surveying and neither can see the logic in the method of the other. This was also in full view of Mike who was already pretty sceptical about our work in the first place.

Afterwards we joined Chris and Wayne and embarked on one of Chris's 'structural adventures' I call them thus because they always begin quite mysteriously. We were to go around each hut in the enclosure and look to see if there were any large boulders next to clearings outside the huts. By doing this we were building up a series of binary oppositions. The whole process is very methodical and at times tedious but it seems to conjure up all sorts of ideas. A clear relationship emerged between larger, robust huts and the presence of what Chris began to call 'bench stones' (large boulders). It is a shame he called them 'bench stones' as it made the whole operation seem trivial. What we were looking at were communal spaces marked off by large boulders. The suggestion being that these boulders would have influenced the positioning of the huts. Large earthfast boulders would have been the centre of 'communal' spaces. We know through ethnography the importance of such 'locales' where, through the everyday rhythms of life, social knowledge is communicated. However by calling them "Bench Stones" and also failing to express what was in his mind Chris had left Matt thinking that Chris was proposing that the huts were placed near stones that would be useful to sit on. So an argument ensued. Matt became increasingly obnoxious and Chris became increasingly agitated. Wayne and I tried to mediate between the two but it had gone to far. Finally Chris cracked:

"I find all this really annoying. You are stuck in an emperical frame of mind but you are studying an interpretive discipline - why don't you just go and study Physics".

This was fair enough I suppose. It summed up the attitude that alot of archaeologists have towards an interpretive approach to archaeology. By striving for "certitude" these archaeologist are not only deceiving themselves but are placing themselves in an intelectual straight jacket where one can only ever reach a very limited and often quite dull understanding of the past. There are two extremes at work on this project and I just wish that they would come together a bit more. Both appraoches have something to offer and by combining a traditional excavation with a more radical interpretive approach we could really do something interesting here. But by being so preoccupied by taking 'sides' I feel that we are missing so many opportunities. Academics like to wax lyrical about their 'sharing of ideas' but this often seems to dissolve into hopeless bickering. But at the moment there isn't even much bickering between the 'diggers' and those working on the survey. We just seem to avoid each other.

As usual this evening was spent in the bar.

Thursday

Day off. After a big breakfast a few of us went to Tinatagel. It was a nice day and as things were getting quite political amongst everyone on site it was nice to spend a day just being a tourist. We ate delicious cornish pasties and explored the caves around Tintagel. A day off like this gives one time to step back and reflect a little about what is going on. I was with the younger members of the project and it struck me how open conversation was. We are able to distance ourselves from it all whereas when I'm with the others discussion is dominated by an intelectual bent. It is sometimes nice just to talk about pop music or football. One has to be so careful what one says. Chris has gone off somewhere and Barbara has gone home. I hope both return refreshed and relaxed. Spending three weeks in close confines with so much thinking and discussing has taken it's toll on quite a few people. There is both a physical and mental exhaustion being felt by alot of people. Mike has been very concerned at his inability to gain an understanding of his excavation and the survey seems to go on without much gain being made. I'm suffering from a bout of insecurity here - are all the hours I spend with Matt studiously documenting walls going to come to anything? It certainly seems much harder to communicate

ones ideas this year. We may all laugh and disregard the cynicism with which the 'diggers' treat 'our' work yet all the time there is this striving for credibility on the survey that seems to manifest itself by impressing more of an objective structure on the survey. Unfortunately this has led to less group discussion between all those working on the survey. With so much room for subjectivity it is so important (and much more interesting) to share ones impressions of the place. Surely this would lead to a much richer interpretation of Lesckernick. By only allowing access to alot of discussions and/or knowledge to those who have certain academic credentials the survey just falls into the same old traps and few will learn anything. It will be neither here nor there. There is also talk of no longer having undergraduates involved or 'non' archaeologists. It sounds so elitist to me and what really disturbs me most is all this talk of 'proffessionals'. There are so few opportunities to be involved in archaeological projects that apply all those radical, interpretive and theoretical approaches that we discuss so much in the stale environment of lecture halls and tutorials. Surely both Barbara and Chris should be keen to pass on this approach and see it progress. Of course it makes it harder work and can cause awkward situations but I feel they both need to be careful that their work does not collapse into a mass of professional contradiction.

This evening in the pub one of the people working on the excavation said that the survey wasn't really hard work. I was struck by the narrow mindedness of this person. Considering that none of the 'diggers' had spent any time on the survey it was particularly annoying. Sue started to gossip 'Where had Chris gone.....bla bla'.

Friday (Summer Solstice)

Today has been quite strange and a little sad. We had decided to have a party by the Coite stone while the sun went down. There had also been talk of spending last night on the hill but the weather would not allow it. I was dissapointed at this. Chris had all sorts of ideas about torches and rock carvings. Well hopefully we will do it next year.

Today began with another wall. Walls are beginning to grind and words like 'significant', 'cairn', 'interesting' and 'stone' have become very stale. These words are no longer expressed with the enthusiasm of a week ago. Instead they are said flattly, something to be noted down on a form. Once said the words are carried off by the wind and we move onto the next piece of wall. We did the wall around hut 50 which stands out on its own and probably isn't a hut at all.

We found lots of piles of stones that could be cairns and showed Jason and his Girlfriend around. While showing Jason around I realised how much I had learned about this hill. My ideas have really progressed since last year. It seems clear to me that there are a whole series of settlements here. The idea that the hill was used and re-used of a significantly long period of time combines very well with our ideas about possible 'ancestral' connections. A very satisfying feeling of achievement swept over me as I talked to Jason. The past week or so suddenly felt really worthwhile.

At lunch Jan arrived with his friend. He had brought with him the replica stones he had been busy making. I was designated to bring them up from the van. Chris also asked me to transform the spoil heap at the end of the stone row into an impression of Rough Tor. I turned to Chris and said 'Look I really do not want to spend the afternoon making sand castles'. I thought that his idea about shaping the spoil heap (first mentioned to me in the pub) was more of a joke than anything else. I was getting quite touchy - 'It's your idea Chris why don't you do it'.

Crystal and Matt also went with me to the van to collect the replica stones. None of us were sure what we were going to find in the van. There was a lengthy discussion before we left for the car park as to how to carry these stones. Jan pointed out that as they were made from empty fruit boxes we should be careful that they didn't get blown away with the wind. 'oh and by the way', says Jan, some of the paint is still wet so be careful not to get it on your clothes'. Barbara gave me the keys to the van telling me that it could be a bit difficult to open the door 'you need to give it a little double push'. Chris looked at his spoil heap despondantly and we proceeded accross the moor to collect the standing stones.

On arrival at the car park we approached the van with great expectation. How had jan managed to create standing stones out of fruit boxes? would we be able to carry them in one trip and exactly how wet was the paint?

I opened the door to the van without the need of a 'double push'. When we saw the stones we all looked rather surprised. I had expected something a bit different - a little more slick perhaps. Lying down they looked as far removed from standing stones as one could imagine (this impression was to prove false as when standing and seen from a distance they were quite impressive). The thought of carting these things across what was now a very blustery moor seemed so absurd that we all begun to chuckle. This chuckling grew into a crescendo of hyterical laughter as Crystal began to photograph matt and my attempts at

trying to figure out how to carry them.

Writing this now I feel a little guilty at our reaction. Jan had obviously put alot of effort into them. After much discussion we decided to make two trips - one for the large stone and the other for the two smaller stones. As we made our passage accross the moor the fruit boxes transformed from being a replica standing stone into a particularly effective kite. We kept ending up walking sideways as the wind pushed the boxes. As we approached the excavation trench I saw Helen's face drop 'What are those?'. Ceira said she thought they looked very '"artistic". She was sat on the edge of the trench looking cold and bored. Crystal suggested that we stop off at the pub on our return journey. This seemed a very good idea. I hinted this idea to Ceira 'we could probably do with a bit of help carrying the others' but she had been press ganged into shading the excavation for a photo.

After a refreshing pint of Guinness we carried the remaining stones to the edge of the trench. By the time we returned everyone had gathered around the cairn and were drinking cups of tea. Barbara laid out a lovely spread of bread and cheese etc and we swapped our cups of tea for some wine. Attempts were being made to erect the stones. Just as we were setting down to eat it became apparant that a number of the archaeologists on the 'digging' side of things were not going to stay for our little soiree. I thought this was bloody rude considering the efforts that Barbara had made. My sympathy towards Mike as being essentially quite an interesting, intense sort of character gave way to me thinking 'what a grumpy bastard'. It was about this stage that Chris went very quite and started to look very pissed off. It seems he had got wind of the rather pathetic gossip that had gone in the pub the day before and was justly very upset. He said that he was also very angry at the narrow mindedness of 'certain individuals'.

It all became very awkward as more and more people began to arrive to watch the solstice. The Cornish Unit arrived with Peter Herring looking very Druidic carrying his staff followed by various minions. The obligation was obviously there to show them around but in the midst of so much atomosphere and tension no one really wanted to. We began to the round while Chris went on about people 'putting 2 and 2 together and getting 6'. By the time we reached hut 20 things were getting very awkward indeed. I decided to take the party off to see a paticularly nice cairn I had found a few days ago. Leaving Chris and Sue to sort themselves out. On arrival at the cairn I got nervous as to what Peter's reaction to this cairn would be. If anything he was a little jealous at not having discovered this himself. I enjoyed showing Peter around. He is so enthusiastic and never afraid to offer some mystical bent to the whole thing.

Afterwards Chris said that he was 'off' and that he didn't want to stay. I was really sad that all of this had happened and against all odds I managed to persuade him to stay and we enjoyed a particularly nice bottle of Robert Mondavi Cabernet Sauvignon (supplied by Crystal) as the sun went down.

On the way down Barbara gave me a bottle of wine and a card given to me by the young archaeologists. I was really touched by this and also pleased that they had enjoyed the tour that I had given them. We all piled into various cars and sped back to the campsite for last orders.

Saturday

I got out of my tent and went to Barbara's caravan to be picked up and taken back to the hill only to be told that this morning was going to be spent at the campsite going over the plans people had made while surveying. This was a good idea but like a lot of the good ideas that were thought up over the weeks it stood alone without proper fore thought. If I had been told about this idea I would have brought down all the plans that Matt and I had made over the past couple of weeks. So it was absolutely pointless me staying at the campsite. I ended up having to get a lift with Sue and the other Chris which was a very uncomfortable journey after yesterday's antics. I was very clearly in Chris's camp who had apparently locked himself in his room last night.

Once I got to Lescernick I felt really melancholic for some reason and fiddling about with bits of maps and recording forms was getting irritating. So I decided to take the opportunity to enjoy some solitude and went for a walk to Coda Tor. We have neglected this side of the valley and I thought it would be nice to see some of the huts on that side. It took me about half an hour to cross the stream at the bottom of the valley which was quite pathetic considering it is only about a metre wide. Cows began to stare at me threateningly and I felt a bit intimidated on my own. It is only on one's own that you get an idea of how open and barren an area this is. It was very windy on top of Coda so I nestled in between some stones to smoke a roll up. It felt good to be on my own. I was sad that this year's time on the moor was nearly over and while I was looking forward to a return to the comforts of home I knew how much I was going to miss this place. Looking across to an empty Lescernick I thought about all the work we had done. All the disagreements, Mike's archaeological angst, Barbara's enthusiasms and Chris's theories. In two days we would leave and the place would return to itself, dormant again for another year.

After a while I thought I'd better get back to the plans. Chris and Barbara had arrived and wanted to know how I'd got on. I don't think they were too impressed when I said I had spent the morning going for a walk so after lunch I went into the tent and went through the forms and maps putting them into some sort of order calmly wondering whether or not they would ever be looked at again.

Afterwards I joined Barbara and Chris and we checked out the work she had done on the Southern settlement. Barbara had noted absolutely everything down from the smallest hump in the ground to larger more satisfying 'cairn like structures'. We began to give Barbara percentage points as to the validity of 'possible' cairns, increasingly Chris playing it safe "I'd say 50/50 on that one." It was nice to see Chris reverting back to himself and it was a fun afternoon. After tea we backfilled to the sounds of England Vs Spain on the Radio which seemed like a gross intrusion to the usual sounds of the moor. I then went to meet Ceira and Matt at the pub. We were joined by Barbara and Chris just after myself and Ceira had selected some music on the juke box. 'nice pub, but the music 's pretty naff' says Barbara.

It was Camilla's birthday so we cooked a big meal in Matt's tent and sunk a few bottles of wine. Afterwards we went to the bar to watch Chris dancing to 80's pop music. The day was rounded off with a bit more wine in Matt's tent. Nice day.

Sunday

Everyone looked very hung over this morning. It was decided not to leave for Leskernik until 10 to give everyone a bit of time to recover. There was a lot of work still to be done on Leskernick. Three weeks worth of equipment remained up there. The arrangement with a local farmer to drive up in a Land Rover was a welcome relief. This little piece of logistics was arranged by Chris. Or rather was supposed to be arranged by Chris as the thing never turned up.

Backfilling is one of the most tedious activities imaginable. Not only is it back breaking it is exceedingly frustrating trying to match up all the pieces of dried up turf. What is even more tedious are the various opinions as to how best this is done and also how archaeologists wax lyrical in a very boring and macho way about 'JCB' diggers.

I spent a few hours collecting marker poles with Chris which was hard work but we managed to lessen this effort by regular fag breaks where we would have interesting chats about things. The arrival of David Hooley meant a welcome

break from such menial tasks. And so off we went to do a bit more thinking about the settlements. After a few minutes with David I soon realised how he has acquired such an intimate knowledge of this region. He stops and looks at absolutely everything. I thought yesterdays walk with Barbara was bad enough but every slight undulation of ground seemed to grab his interest. He kept darting off all over the place. Reaching his destination he places his little bag on the ground squats down, and squints his eyes as he examines something that I would have gleefully said was not 'of significance'.

We examined each hut in minutes and discussed at length ideas about the re-use of huts, older huts being used as bases of cairns and also the chronology of the "two" settlements. We then approached Mikes excavation and I think I left when they began to discuss soil structure.

It had been decided to have lunch on or by the Coite stone. This is the part of the hill that I think I love the most. The views from here are very impressive and bring the 'locale' we are working in into a scale and perspective that is easy to lose when scouring enclosure walls. It is set apart from the rest of the hill. Huts are difficult to see from here and one can't get away from feeling how special this place was (and is 'to me').

As I walked up to the Coite and people began to come into focus (I never found my glasses) a really strange wave of extreme irritation swept over me. People were draped all over the Coite stone, others sat around reading the Sunday papers. A Radio Cassette player, propped up on the Coite, was blaring tacky Southern American swamp blues music. It struck me how possessive I have become of this little part of the world. The Music, the papers and the attitude present at the hill was a complete antithesis to me. As I sat there struggling with my dry cheese sandwich this music really began to wind me up. Very possibly suffering from dehydration; I had visions of trashing the machine with one of the backfilling shovels. Instead I just went over and turned it down. Mike went all weird (again).

My feelings here might seem over the top and it is probably wrong to apotheosise this small area of Bronze Age sculpture. But that's how I felt.

The insensitivity to 'place' that people showed can be seen as a metaphor for the many downfalls of 'traditional' archaeological practice. The 'diggers' treated their excavations in much the same way a builder would a construction site (yet in their case a 'deconstruction' site'). Through their reluctance to lift their heads from their trenches they had failed to develop an understanding of the surrounding locale they were working within. How can they ever hope to come to an understanding of what they are excavating if they refuse to look at it all in terms of a wider perspective. Their insensitivity

to 'place' demonstrated today just struck me as being a product of narrow mindedness and professional cowardice.

This is an important point as it inevitably affects the ways in which an excavation and its resultant 'structures' and 'finds' are both recorded and interpreted. There is a danger of the two approaches to this project becoming so distant that we will cease to gather ideas from each other. That would be a real shame.

Well that is it for another year. This time tomorrow I'll be back in London with a whole lot of other things to worry about. I'm going to miss all the people and our daily drive to Leskernik. It has been a very tiring two weeks that's been fun, exhilarating if a bit strained at times. I have gained a very intimate knowledge and attachment to Leskernik. It is somewhere that I could happily say that I really love and hope to return there for many years to come.

Thanks to all three of you for organising everything - see you in June.

Henry.